

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-33 are currently pending. Claims 1-29 have been amended; and Claims 30-33 have been added by the present amendment. The changes and additions to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

The amended and newly submitted claims are supported by the originally filed specification at least at page 11, lines 24-33; and page 13, lines 17-28.

In the outstanding Office Action, the specification was objected to as containing informalities; Claims 23 and 28 were objected to as containing informalities; Claims 24-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter; Claims 8, 10, 21, 23, and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, regarding the use of the phrase “a type of the data”; Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 11-14, 17, 19-21, 24, and 26-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP Patent No. 2001270194 to Kobayashi (hereinafter “the ‘194 patent”);<sup>1</sup> Claims 3, 5, 7, 16, 18, and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘194 patent in view of JP Patent No. 2001217972 to Kajita (hereinafter “the ‘972 patent”); Claims 9, 22, and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘194 patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,892,595 to Yamakawa et al. (hereinafter “the ‘595 patent”); Claims 10 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘194 patent in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0019429 to Oteki et al. (hereinafter “the ‘429 application”); and Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘194 patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,038,818 to Namizuka (hereinafter “the ‘818 patent”).

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<sup>1</sup> A courtesy copy of a machine translation of the ‘194 patent is enclosed herewith.

Regarding the objections to the specification, the specification has been amended to address the informalities noted in the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, the objections to the specification are believed to have been overcome.

Regarding the objections to Claims 23 and 28, those claims have been amended to address the informalities noted in the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, the objections to Claims 23 and 28 are believed to have been overcome.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 24-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 101, Claim 24 has been amended to recite a computer-readable storage medium, including computer executable instructions, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform a method for controlling an image forming apparatus, as suggested by the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claims 24-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 be withdrawn.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to an image forming apparatus, comprising:

an image reading device configured to read an image of an original document;

an image forming device configured to form an image on a sheet in accordance with image data read by the image reading device;

an operation unit connecting device configured to detachably connect an operation unit, said operation unit being configured to accept inputting of operational instructions for operating the image forming apparatus;

a process controller configured to control an operation of the image forming apparatus; and

an expansion unit connecting device configured to connect an additionally attachable expansion unit, said additionally attachable expansion unit including an expansion control device configured to allocate the image reading device or the image forming device to a job,

wherein the expansion control device is configured to allocate resources of the image forming apparatus, and

said process controller is configured to control the operation unit to operate and to receive a control command from the expansion control device to perform image formation.

Regarding the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), the ‘194 patent is directed to an image forming apparatus. In particular, the outstanding Office Action cites the CPU 102, contained in the main control device 101, of the ‘194 patent for teaching the process controller recited in Claim 1. Further, the outstanding Office Action cites external devices (e.g., a fax unit, a printer unit, and a scanner unit) 413-415 of the ‘194 patent for teaching the additionally attachable expansion unit including the expansion control device recited in Claim 1.<sup>2</sup>

However, it is respectfully submitted that the ‘194 patent fails to at least disclose that the expansion control device is configured to *allocate resources of the image forming apparatus*. Rather, paragraph [0021] of the ‘194 patent discusses that

[h]ere, if the both sides of CPU702 and the FAX unit 713 enable it to perform control of LCD and an extension change key, the addition of the mediation circuit for avoiding the collision of control will be needed. With the gestalt of this operation, when an exclusive format of a LCD data transfer and an input of an extension change key is prepared for the data format between the master side control unit control IC 705 and the slave side control unit control IC 710 as a control line 716 and FAX unit:713 perform only control of LCD and an extension change key, clarification of the division in their duty *at the time of development* and simplification of the control circuit by mediation circuit needlessness are realized.<sup>3</sup>

That is, the ‘194 patent discusses that a mediation circuit for allocating resources is not necessary, since the division of duties are assigned at the time of development. The ‘194 patent does not disclose that the external devices *allocate resources of the image forming apparatus*.

Further, it is noted that the outstanding Office Action cites to numerous paragraphs of the ‘194 patent but does not provide an English translation of the ‘194 patent. Although

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<sup>2</sup> See Office Action dated September 21, 2007, pages 5-7.

<sup>3</sup> See attached Machine Translation JP2001270194, paragraph [0021].

Applicant has obtained a machine translation of the ‘194 patent, see attached, it is unclear how the cited paragraphs support the teachings asserted by the outstanding Office Action. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner provide an accurate English translation of the ‘194 patent. Further, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner provide a detailed explanation of any contrary interpretation of the ‘194 patent, and specifically point out, such as by column and line number, where each limitation of the claim can be found, such that Applicant may fairly consider whether all the limitations of Claim 1 are taught by the ‘194 patent.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claim 1 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably defines over the ‘194 patent.

Amended Claim 11 recites limitations analogous to the limitations recited in Claim 1. Further, Claim 11 has been amended in a manner analogous to the amendments to Claim 1. Accordingly, for reasons analogous to the reasons stated above for the patentability of Claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claim 11 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably defines over the ‘194 patent.

Amended Claims 17 and 24 recite in part, allocating, by the expansion control device, resources of the image forming apparatus when the presence of the connection of the additionally attachable expansion unit is detected.

As noted above, the ‘194 patent fails to disclose the expansion control device recited in Claim 1. Thus, the ‘194 patent fails to disclose the methods of independent Claims 17 and 24. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 17 and 24 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over the ‘194 patent.

Regarding the rejections of dependent Claims 3, 5, 7, 16, 18, and 25, it is respectfully submitted that the ‘972 patent fails to remedy the deficiencies of the ‘194 patent, as discussed

above. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that dependent Claims 3, 5, 7, 16, 18, and 25 patentably define over any proper combination of the ‘194 and ‘972 patents.

Regarding the rejections of dependent Claims 9, 22, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), it is respectfully submitted that the ‘595 patent fails to remedy the deficiencies of the ‘194 patent, as discussed above. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that dependent Claims 9, 22, and 29 patentably define over any proper combination of the ‘194 and ‘595 patents.

Regarding the rejections of dependent Claims 10 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), it is respectfully submitted that the ‘429 application fails to remedy the deficiencies of the ‘194 patent, as discussed above. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that dependent Claims 10 and 23 patentably define over any proper combination of the ‘194 patent and the ‘429 application.

Regarding the rejection of dependent Claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), it is respectfully submitted that the ‘818 patent fails to remedy the deficiencies of the ‘194 patent, as discussed above. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that dependent Claim 15 patentably defines over any proper combination of the ‘194 and ‘818 patents.

The present amendment also sets forth new Claims 30-33 for examination on the merits. It is noted that these more detailed features are not disclosed or suggested by the applied references.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 11, 17, and 24 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over any proper combination of the ‘194 patent, the ‘972 patent, the ‘595 patent, the ‘429 application, and the ‘818 patent.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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